

The Art Institute of Atlanta 2020-2023 QEP Summary

First Year Student Engagement: Creating the Edge in Academic Success

The Art Institute of Atlanta has selected the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) topic, First Year Student Engagement: Creating the Edge in Academic Success, for its reaffirmation of accreditation in 2020. The topic statement reads:

Engage students throughout the first year to strengthen relationships with peers, faculty and staff with the goal of increasing awareness of program requirements, institutional policies, and support services; and to develop academic and professional skills that will impact academic success in their first year to graduation.

The topic was selected and developed through a broad-based and university-wide effort involving key stakeholders. The Art Institute believes that the QEP will help more students persist through their first year of college and prepare them to be successful throughout their academic careers to graduation. This QEP reinforces the institutional commitment to provide a positive educational experience.

There are four overarching goals of the QEP:

1. Students will develop effective working relationships with peers, faculty, and staff;
2. Students will develop professional skills to enhance their educational success;
3. Students will develop the academic skills necessary to succeed in a professional program of study;
4. Students will understand the institutional policies and procedures of the college

There are three QEP milestones comprised of various learning activities and co-curricular events with the goal of increasing engagement between faculty, staff and the new students.

Milestone #1: College Success Modules and New Student Orientation

New Student Orientation activities are aligned with the goals of the QEP through programming elements that identify student resources such as program information, faculty and staff support, and details about program and institutional policies. The College Success Modules reiterate this information on the institution's LMS and are bundled as a required part of the orientation and feature embedded quiz content to ensure expected outcomes are being measured.

Milestone #2: College Success Seminar

CS101, the College Success Seminar, has undergone revisions since its launch that feature two significant changes. The first change is the length of time, and the second is the alignment of the content within the course. As indicated by data developed during the pilot of the first version of the course, the length of the class was expanded from three weeks to eight weeks, with each week's content aligning with the QEP's stated goals. These goals are shared with the students as explicit learning objectives as follows: *Participate* in order to get to know fellow students, faculty and staff; *Manage* to learn the policies of the department and the institution; *Prepare* to learn how to manage time, money, relationships, and the program; and *Advance* by engaging in research, writing, and speaking in line with the community of professional practice.

Milestone #3: General Education Courses highlighting Professional Skills and Co-curricular Events

Within select general education courses, faculty will engage with the new students and encourage the completion of activities focused on academic and professional skills such as time management, financial literacy, teamwork, communication, and a focus on improving awareness of institutional policies that will help them to be successful their academic programs. These activities are considered a graded portion of the courses they're embedded within, and are also tracked separately to ensure outcomes can be tracked back to the QEP's goals.